

1. SCOPE

On behalf of the Australian Council for Children and Parenting's (ACCAP) Children at Risk Committee, the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services commissioned the National Child Protection Clearinghouse at the Australian Institute of Family Studies to conduct this project. The aim of the project is to inform the development of strategies designed to enhance the recruitment, retention and support of Indigenous carers and the cultural connections for Indigenous children in out-of-home care. This project focuses on home-based care arrangements, but also includes some references to residential and other forms of out-of-home care.

This document is the final report in the project commissioned by ACCAP and comprises the research study (to be read in conjunction with the final report describing the companion literature review) and dissemination strategy. This final report was preceded by a draft literature review, final literature review, a draft report describing the research findings and a draft paper discussing options for dissemination.

The aim of the project was to identify carers, service providers and young people in care's views on the challenges and promising practice in Indigenous out-of-home care arrangements and to share promising practice initiatives among government and non-government agencies and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The National Child Protection Clearinghouse has engaged in consultations with key stakeholders in the out-of-home care sector in each state and territory, as well as conducting focus groups with Indigenous young people in care, and both Indigenous and non-Indigenous carers of Indigenous young people in two states (WA and Qld).

The study was not intended to be a state-by-state audit of practices in each jurisdiction. However, an overview of the current structure of out-of-home care in each jurisdiction is useful so that the information provided by participants has a context. Tables 2 - 5 (see Appendix B) have been developed as an appendix with the cooperation of each of the states and territories to provide this contextual framework.